

REMARKS

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ON

THE AFRICAN SQUADRON.

BY

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OF THE MIDDLE TEMPLE, BARRISTER.

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REMARKS ON THE AFRICAN SQUADRON.

Alleged Inefficiency of the Squadron on the Coast of Africa.

OF the arguments for a change in the policy hitherto pursued by Great Britain with reference to the Slave Trade, by far the most important is the allegation that the preventive measures hitherto adopted have proved wholly inefficient in practice. This assertion is sometimes put forward with some qualifications, as—that the squadron on the coast of Africa may have caused a rise of prices of slaves in Cuba and Brazil, and nothing more—but in substance it remains the same—our efforts have been in vain, and, if we assume certain principles, said to be established in smuggling trades, to be analogous with those which govern the Slave Trade, must ever prove ineffectual. The practical question, then, resolves itself into an examination of the evidence by which the failure of our preventive measures is said to be established. If it be found by the balance of testimony that the squadron has been futile and inefficient, it is clear either that new repressive means must be devised, or the object wholly abandoned. If, on the other hand, it appears that the squadron has been generally effective, and that the degree in which it has failed of complete success can fairly be accounted for by causes which have been, or may be, made to cease to operate henceforward, the case for a discontinuance of the national policy falls to the ground.

In either case, the argument drawn from the supposed analogy above-mentioned, may be neglected, as in the former it is superfluous to investigate it, and in the latter it is manifest from the facts themselves that the analogy has no existence.

In an illicit trade such as that in question, there can, of course, be no return corresponding in authenticity and arithmetical accuracy with those of legitimate traffic. It is, therefore, not possible to bring forward any precise evidence of the yearly imports of slaves to Cuba or Brazil, in reply to the vague assertions, under which the indefinite swells into the infinite. Certain loose calculations, however, partly compiled from the accounts of the slave-traders themselves, and partly from less suspicious sources, have been adopted by the opponents of the Squadron as an approximation to the real truth of the matter, sufficiently precise for all practical purposes. They were, it is true, somewhat discredited by a witness named Dr. Cliffe, who, as it appeared before the Committee of the House of Lords, had supplied some materials for their compilation; and it will be necessary for us hereafter to revert to them to show their inaccuracy upon another point. But, on the whole, with respect to the efficiency of the Squadron, we have no option but to take them as the only evidence in a positive form that has been adduced against the preventive measures hitherto pursued, and further, if we take them as they stand, and show that even *they* fail to establish the case against the Squadron, it will at least be requisite to call for other evidence, if it be necessary still to entertain the reconsideration of the national policy.

The calculations in question are, as might be expected, in a tabular form. They appear in the report of Mr. Hutt's Committee in the year 1848. As they

are thus easily accessible it is unnecessary to reproduce them at full length, and the few quotations we shall make may be readily verified.

In the first place, these tables show, and it is, indeed, an indisputable fact, that until the Squadron came effectively into operation the increase of the Slave Trade advanced with frightful rapidity. In 1805, the gross export of slaves to all countries is stated at 85,000 ; in 1815, though, in the interval, the Slave Trade of England and the United States was abolished, together forming at least one-half of the whole traffic, yet the amount had sprung up to 93,000 ; in 1817, it is stated at 106,600 ; and, in 1836, had reached 135,800. The Slave Trades of all civilized nations, except Cuba and Brazil, had ceased in the later years, so that the proportional increase in the importations of these two countries is very much greater than would appear from the gross numbers given. To exemplify this, it may be observed, that in the first year mentioned it is calculated that Cuba took only 6,000 and Brazil 15,000 slaves. In the later years cited, these imports had grown to 40,000 and 65,000 respectively ; (the latter is a great understatement.) Thus, these tables show that the state of the Slave Trade, unchecked by the Squadron, was one of large, rapid, and continuous development.

In 1835 a new treaty with Spain allowed the seizure of slave vessels, before, as well as after shipping Slaves ; in 1839, an Act of Parliament was passed enabling the squadron to seize Portuguese vessels also, equipped for the Slave Trade ; the developement above-mentioned, ceased altogether from those dates respectively. The gross number of slaves exported in the subsequent years, viz. from 1840 to 1847, ranges, from 28,400 to 84,356. Taking even the latter number, we find a

diminution of upwards of 51,000 slaves exported in the year, as compared with 1836, and notwithstanding this glaring fact, notwithstanding the progressive development of every legal trade in this septennial period, notwithstanding the impulse given to Brazilian and Cuban cultivation, by the recent admission of its produce to the English market, we are called upon to negative the efficiency of the squadron altogether, though no other influence prejudicial to the Slave-Trade can be adduced to account for this singular mercantile phenomenon. If we go more into the details afforded by those very tables, we meet with the astounding fact that the Cuban Slave Trade may be almost said to be extinguished. The number of its victims had sunk to 1500, and the coast from which it drew its supplies, the west coast of Africa, north of the Equator, has, with the exception of three hundred miles in the Bight of Benin, been completely closed against its exigencies. That this has been happily accomplished is not denied, nay, it appears upon the face of the tabular statement put forward by those who would discontinue the squadron on the ground of its inefficiency ; but strange to say, the principal means by which this result has been brought about are impugned when it is proposed to recur to them in future operations.

When naval officers have perseveringly cruised close to the shore, they have had far greater success in making captures, and it has been shown to demonstration that if the Slave barracoons on the coast are destroyed the illicit trade becomes next to impossible.

The tables fully admit this fact, by their statement of the diminished amount of the trade, during the five years when these measures were, to a considerable extent, in operation.

Total number of Slaves imported into Cuba and Brazil.

1840	.....	44,470
1841	.....	27,857
1842	.....	17,350
1843	.....	38,500
1844	.....	36,000
1845	.....	24,050

Vide Report, Committee of the House of Commons, 1848.

But the system of distant cruising was again, for a certain time, practised, and though the destruction of barracoons is no longer declared illegal, it is still insisted on, that it is comparatively useless, in spite of the complete success which attended it at Gallinas, at the time of Captain Denman's attack in 1840; and also on the South Coast, when the system was resorted to by Captains Matson and Butterfield in subsequent years. It would be beyond the purpose of these remarks, to go farther into detail upon the modes of operation hitherto adopted by the squadron, or proposed to be adopted by it for the future. Treaties with, and small subsidies to native chiefs, the destruction of barracoons when possible, and vigilant in-shore cruising,* have brought about the

* It may appear a little rash for a landsman to express so confident an opinion on what may be deemed a naval question, but the subject has been thoroughly investigated by the Lords' Committee, and the perusal of the evidence must carry conviction to any dispassionate inquirer. Their lordships state in their report :—" Thus " the best system has at no period been acted upon by the whole " force employed : and the want of clearly defined objects, and " consistency in the mode of action, combined with an insufficient " numerical force, composed of vessels not suited to the service, " fully accounts for the degree of failure we have encountered. It " appears by the concurrent testimony of all the naval witnesses, " with, perhaps, a single exception, that in-shore cruising, directed " to prevent the shipment of slaves, is the most effective mode " of employing the squadron."

favourable results already specified. Vessels, in particular steam screw-ships, of comparatively small tonnage, and, therefore, more generally available against fast-sailing slavers in light winds, are, it is said, in preparation for the service on the African coast. Orders have been recently issued to cruize for slavers on the Brazilian coast, and have already produced, as we shall presently show, the most striking results. Brazil and Spain are solemnly bound to this country to put down this nefarious trade ; England is now, it seems, resolved to enforce the fulfilment of these treaties. It is not reasonable to suppose, that these measures will fail of their object, judging from what has been shown to have taken place since 1839, when fewer and less efficient means were in operation ; but it may be difficult to meet the Protean objections that are made to the present system. If prices of slaves are low in Brazil, it is confidently said that the squadron does nothing ; if they are high that it is a law in commerce, that a certain amount of possible profit sets all risk at defiance, and the trade will flourish in spite of the squadron. If many slavers are captured the trade must be enormous to sustain such losses, and yet exist ; if none have sailed from the African coast, and there are, consequently, no captures, it is easy to suppose that they have escaped notice, and that slave trading ingenuity invariably eludes the vigilance of cruisers. In short, though 594 captures have been made between the years 1840 and 1848, though the Cuban slave trade is almost annihilated, though the Brazilian slave trade, when vigorously attacked in 1840, numbered, according to Mr. Bandinel, only 14,000 victims, instead of 94,000 at which he estimated it in 1838, though Mr. M'Culloch, writing in 1840, contemplated the probability of sugar cultivation ceasing in Brazil,

for want of imported slaves, the objection is still made, that the squadron has been, and ever must be inefficient.

But there has been an increase of slaves imported into Brazil during the two years 1846 and 1847. The tables above referred to state the numbers as 52,600 and 57,800, those imported in 1845 being rated at 22,700 only. Now, though the tables in question are by no means entitled to a prompt acquiescence in their accuracy, and have been above cited only to prove that the opponents of the squadron have, on their own showing, made out a case destructive of their own theories, it is very probable that there has been a considerable increase in the trade during those two years. Such an increase, however, is easily accounted for. In 1845, the Mixed Courts for trial of Brazilian slave-traders were broken up, and before the Act of Parliament was passed, authorizing the cruisers to capture such vessels, the southern coast was left altogether unwatched—it being of course useless to capture a vessel, for the condemnation of which there was no provision. In the next place, the English market was opened to slave-grown sugar in 1846, and thereby some impulse was added to the Slave Trade—an element certainly not to be neglected in the calculation of operating causes, but, we must at the same time remember, peculiarly liable to be over-estimated. In the third place, the system of destroying barracoons was suspended, in consequence of the ambiguity of Sir John Dodson's opinion upon the legality of destroying goods destined for the Slave Trade, and found in barracoons; and during the same period, the old system of cruising in the open sea, on the chance of falling in with slavers on their passage, was resumed in those quarters of the African coast whence Brazil has always obtained the bulk of her slaves. Three of these

causes have now ceased to operate against the success of the preventive measures. The admission of slave-grown sugar to British markets remains; but when we remember that already the difference between the price of a slave in Africa and in Brazil has been as £3 or £5 to £60 or £80, it is clear that an additional incentive from augmented profit in a successful venture, can hardly stimulate the slave trader to greater exertions than he has hitherto made. Before the question of the efficiency of the squadron is dismissed, it may be well to remark that the high prices of slaves in Cuba and Brazil, though asserted to be a proof that it is impossible to suppress the Trade, are in fact the most legitimate evidence that much, very much, has been effected towards doing so. The characteristics of a *flourishing trade* are larger aggregate profits and diminished individual profits in proportion to the increase of capital employed in it—capital of course coming in more freely as *risks* diminish. With the slave trade it is exactly the reverse. When most lose, the profits of a few may be enormous, but the aggregate trade will be at a low ebb. The last cargo of slaves landed in Brazil will probably be disposed of at an unprecedented profit.

These considerations appear to have been strangely overlooked in the House of Commons, when Mr. Hutt, after declaring himself the most strenuous opponent of every measure for the purpose, was named Chairman of the Committee appointed to consider "the best means Great Britain can adopt for the final extinction of the Slave Trade." In his memorable speech, the Hon. Chairman exclaims :* "There was a smuggling trade that realized 2000 per cent. profit, and did they think that naval officers, and men-of-war could put it down." Does

* *Vide Hansard, February 22, 1848.*

not 2000 per cent. profit represent an enormous diminution of human victims, and a comparative degree of peace and security to Africa? Does it not represent an amount of failure, loss, and discouragement to the great mass of speculators. A little more vigour, and yet larger gains, much more, and the trade is put down—their amount is after to a certain point the test of our success. Can Mr. Hutt be simple enough to suppose that (besides its grievous wickedness) there is any inherent or peculiar property in slave trading, which can account for so singular a violation of the ordinary laws which govern mercantile transactions. Surely little unprejudiced reflection is required to show that 2000 per cent. profit indicates a near approach to complete suppression.

Mortality in the Squadron.

Upon the subject of the loss of life in the naval force employed against the Slave Trade, the recent investigation before both Houses of Parliament, has thrown all the light that can be desired. Up to that time it was generally believed to be the most fatal service upon which seamen could be employed; and the failure of the Niger expedition, of the attempt to colonize Fernando Po, and the frightful mortality at Sierra Leone, in times past, went far to increase the pestilential reputation of everything connected with the west coast of Africa. The most recent evidence upon the subject has fortunately dispelled all alarm as far as the squadron is concerned. The land and the rivers no doubt are fatal to European life under certain circumstances, but the Slave Trade has been expelled from the rivers, and the shortest distance from the coast secures a climate perfectly safe and salubrious. The duties of the squadron rarely require exposure to the fatal malaria, and by the care of the

officers in command, it has been brought about that the mortality on board ship does not exceed one and a-half per cent.—a lower rate than that prevailing in the squadrons on the West Indian, East Indian, China, and Mediterranean stations, and very far below that of the troops in those quarters.

Sufferings of Slaves alleged to be increased on the Middle Passage by the operation of the Squadron.

Not satisfied with the assertion of the inefficiency of the squadron, an assertion based, as has been seen, upon the data above examined, the opponents of the squadron have endeavoured to prove also, that the sufferings of the slaves embarked from Africa have been fearfully increased by the preventive measures. It was of course desirable to maintain this position, as increased sufferings to increased numbers would complete their case in favour of a prompt discontinuance of the present system, and none of the arguments they have urged have had a more powerful effect on the public mind. It is, therefore, highly important to examine the grounds upon which the assertion is made. - First and foremost, as on the assumption that the amount of the Slave Trade is still increasing, we are called on to accept the tabular statement in the report of Mr. Hutt's committee, but in this case it will be the more necessary to examine its trustworthiness, as it is at all events consistent with the allegations it is intended to support. In fact, from the year 1815, when the first treaties were signed for the suppression of the Slave Trade, to the last year comprised in the list, these tables show an increase of mortality among the slaves exported to the amount of eleven per cent. The deaths before that date being stated at fourteen, and after it at twenty-five per cent.

Now, in the first place, this statement appears wholly absurd, when we recollect the nature of the check put upon the trade by Great Britain during the first fifteen years of her antagonism. Five or six most unserviceable vessels were all that were sent to the Coast of Africa as a preventive squadron; for many years, they retired from their cruize during the rainy season, and the whole of the Brazilian trade south of the Line was absolutely secured by treaty from all molestation by them. Occasionally, indeed, Portuguese vessels, destined for Brazil, came to take in their living cargo in the Bight of Benin, to escape the duties levied on them in the Portuguese settlements—so trivial was the risk of capture even on those points, with the miserable means then at the disposal of our naval officers. The assertion, therefore, of a generally increased mortality in slave ships, when the preventive measures affected but one part of the trade very slightly, and the far greater part *not at all*, is sufficient of itself to discredit the tables in question. There is, however, positive evidence that establishes, beyond the very possibility of doubt or cavil, the very reverse of these *trustworthy* assertions. It is not disputed that the mortality among the slaves, when captured on the passage, is always considerably greater than when they are landed, without interruption, in Brazil. If, therefore, it can be shown that the mortality in captured ships is less than that alleged by the tables, *a fortiori* it is also less in the vessels which escape. Sir C. Hotham's evidence is, therefore, decisive of the question of fact, for that officer proves in his evidence from official returns, that the mortality in captured ships, so far from having risen to 25 per cent., has actually fallen to nine per cent.—a proportion less by five per cent. than that given for vessels which pursued their course unmolested before 1815.

So much for the *fact*. In the opinion of the same witness, the mortality on board vessels which escape is only five per cent. Even assuming that the deaths on board vessels which escape to be as high as nine per cent., then the average loss of life in vessels that pursued their course unmolested before 1815 (14 per cent.), *was more than half as much again as* that which is now incurred, under what Sir Charles Hotham calls "the worst circumstances." Thus it is as fairly established as any point can be, that there is actually a very large diminution in the mortality as well as in the amount of the Slave Trade, and this is distinctly proved by Sir C. Hotham and other witnesses to be the direct effect of the squadron. The squadron has caused speed in shipping, and in former days a vessel loitered about while her cargo was gradually being made up. The squadron necessitates the employment of fast sailers, and when the Slave Trade was unmolested, ordinary ships were employed in it with no greater speed than possessed by those in other branches of commerce, with which capacity is at least as valuable as any other quality. There may be, perhaps, no difference in the actual suffering of a slave in the hold of a fast or slow sailer, but in the latter case it is obvious that the duration of the suffering *must* be shortened. As to the crowding of the slaves, an affliction that caused the slave-carrying Act to be passed before 1790, it is idle to suppose that any principle beyond a desire to carry as many slaves as possible should influence it. The evidence of Mr. R. Stokes (p. 242, Lords Report, 1849) establishes beyond a doubt, that the crowding could not, and therefore has not been increased; though the well-known alteration of the English system of measuring would make it appear upon paper that more slaves to the tonnage are now taken than was the case formerly.

The state of feeling in Brazil.

Another point that has recently been much insisted upon in controversy, regarding our preventive measures, is the reluctance of the Brazilian Government, and of the Brazilian people, to co-operate, or even keep good faith with us in any matter connected with the importation of negroes to that country. It is assumed that a proud nationality, smarting from the indignity sustained in 1845 at the hands of the English Parliament, baffles the efforts of Great Britain; that the Brazilians, contrary to their better feelings, are thus stimulated to carry on the Slave Trade in violation of the national faith solemnly pledged—on the point of honour! A reference to the evidence of Mr. Ousely, formerly Chargé d’Affaires at Rio, and Captain Skipwith, before the Lords’ Committee of 1850, gives a very different view of the matter. The Slave-Trade is in the hands of the Portuguese, to whom the Brazilians bear an inveterate hatred, but who, by their constituting the greater portion of the monied class, have long held the Government in a state of abject subserviency. According to Mr. Ousely there is a considerable party now who sympathize with the policy of England, and occasionally go so far as to reproach the apparently dilatory measures which have been hitherto taken. Indeed, so far from adopting the despondent view that has recently been in vogue in this country, Brazilians, in conversation with that gentleman, have said, “You are not in earnest about it; if England chose to put down the Slave-Trade she could do so;” and upon the occasion of a slave insurrection, “We should be very glad to see you exert your power more vigorously,” (p. 29, Lords’ Report, 1850). Commander Skipwith (p. 47, *ibid.*) reports still

more decidedly as to the sentiments of a large and growing party in that country. So far from being indignant, they have been delighted with the capture of slavers on the Brazilian coast, and have upon the notification of them, repaired to Mr. Hudson, the British Minister, urging him to cruise more vigorously than ever.

The evidence of the two gentlemen last mentioned received further corroboration of a most important character, from Mr. Hesketh, the Consul at Rio Janeiro. The anti-slave trade party, he declares, is considerably on the increase; and its importance at Rio may be estimated from the fact, that three newspapers advocate its principles. The price of a slave had, at the date of his letter (March 1850), increased from 32% to 54% in consequence of the captures on the coast, which he alleges, are heard of with pleasure by the national party, the Brazilians, as instances of discomfiture of the alien population, the Portuguese, towards whom they entertain the strongest social and political antipathy.

Recent accounts from Rio de Janeiro afford the strongest possible confirmation of these plain statements of practical men, and set the "point of honour" theory at rest for ever. Pledged to treat the Slave Trade as piracy, and to abolish it for ever, by the Convention with England of 1826, the Brazilian Government had continued down to the year 1850, to foster and encourage the crime. In 1850, Great Britain having been thus long empowered by this convention to treat them as pirates, at length ordered the slavers to be seized in their depôts in the ports of Brazil. Collisions took place, attended with loss of life, and what was the result? The measures were popular with the Brazilian people; the Government is said to have entered into an agreement with the British Minister, as to the circumstances under

which slave vessels should be henceforth seized, and at once brought in and passed a law, declaring them pirates. To those who believe that, *because* the profits on a successful voyage are 2000 (probably now they are 4000) per cent., our efforts can never produce any sensible effect, except to multiply the victims, and aggravate the sufferings, we offer the following opinion of one who is well able to form a judgment, a member of that government which up to the date of these vigorous measures, had supported the slave dealers.

“The *Rio Journal of Commerce*, of the 16th of July, contains the statements made by the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the Chamber of Deputies on the preceding day, regarding the slave-trade question, and also the destruction of the fort of Paranaguay by the ‘Cormorant.’ The minister referred to the various delays that had hitherto attended all attempts at negotiation with the British Government, and expressed a hope that the time was approaching when the propositions of Brazil would meet with attention. Without entering, however, into the various practical grievances of which the country had to complain, he would ask the House to look at the subject in a larger way, and to consider whether, when a power, like Great Britain had shown her determination to suppress the slave trade, and had succeeded in enlisting other nations in the undertaking, it would be possible much longer for Cuba and Brazil alone to carry it on. He believed not. England had made treaties with several of the principal chiefs on ~~the~~ African coast where the trade was conducted, and the spirit of civilization would not rest until it had completed its work.”—*Times*, Sept. 13, 1850.

Stranger still is our more recent intelligence. It would appear from the following extract from the

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"Times," of Nov. 27th, that a revulsion of feeling has taken place, not only in the Brazilian people but also in the Brazilian Government, from which we may anticipate that that Power from henceforth will be reckoned among our warmest supporters, instead of among our most inveterate antagonists, in our attempts to suppress the Slave Trade.

"The Brazilian war-steamer 'Urania,' entered yesterday from a cruise, bringing on board 208 African slaves and the crew of the brig 'Rolha,' all captured at Macahé. On the same day the celebrated slave-merchant, Joaquim Pinto da Fonseca, had been arrested and placed in close confinement, it being discovered that he was the owner of the brig 'Rolha,' captured by the Brazilian war-steamer, 'Urania.' There had been another capture by a Brazilian steamer-of-war, off St. Catherine's, of a brig, with 120 slaves on board."—Extract from the "Journal do Commercio" of October 8. *Times*, Nov. 27, 1850.

Destruction of Barracoons.

Returning again to the causes which have interrupted the effective operations of our naval officers, the most serious impediment must be traced to an unfortunate misunderstanding relative to an opinion of the Queen's Advocate, who referring to the proceedings of Captain Denman at Gallinas, observed, that in the event of "any goods of foreign merchants" being found in slave factories, it would be clearly illegal to include them in the general destruction. The immediate result of this was, that both slave traders, and the officers of the squadron, applied the admonition to the only goods which, in the experience of either, were ever found in slave factories, viz., the goods

brought by the slave-traders to barter for slaves. This error unfortunately remained uncorrected from the year 1842, when the opinion was given, till the beginning of 1848, in the latter end of which, a letter from Captain Denman, as to the correct interpretation of the phrase in the opinion, elicited from the distinguished civilian an explanation to the effect that "the foreign traders," implied other persons than those engaged in the nefarious slave-traffic. As soon as this was notified, the destruction of barracoons was renewed with fresh vigour. Sir C. Hotham and Captain Dunlop finally demolished the establishment at Gallinas, which had been rebuilt on the strength of the Queen's advocates supposed opinion, and the latter gave a passage to the discomfited traders, who were glad to escape from the neighbourhood of the native chiefs, whose favour they had no longer the means of conciliating.

It is hardly necessary to say much upon the necessity of the existence of the slave factories (or barracoons as they are called) to a prosperous state of the slave trade. The object of their erection is obvious enough. The cruiser is ever on the watch ; a moment of accidental absence is the golden opportunity for the slave-ship ; it is indispensable that the cargo should be shipped in a few hours, and the only method of effecting this is by having it ready on a spot close to the shore. This exigency is forced upon the slave traders by the presence of the squadron ; in former times a ship could sail from point to point without molestation, and take up slaves where she found them. The depôt of goods on the same spot to exchange them for slaves when the opportunity offers, is what cannot now be dispensed with. When, therefore, a barracoon is discovered, and with its contents destroyed, a double purpose is served. The

means of obtaining slaves and those of carrying them off are annihilated at a blow. The building, it is true, might be replaced by one built farther inland, but it would no longer answer its purpose, and would be almost certain to be instantly plundered by the surrounding natives.

Expense of the Squadron.

In the meantime the costliness of the national exertions is supposed to weigh heavily upon the tax-payers. The Mediterranean and other Squadrons on service are passed by, and untold expenditure, it is supposed, may be saved by a retrenchment of that on the African coast. The expense of the squadron, however, is the not very alarming sum of £166,840 10s., and, in any case, it is admitted on all hands that a large proportion of this outlay must be still disbursed to protect trade against piracy, if the preventive service were to be abolished forthwith. Upon this point there is no difference of opinion. The remainder of the expenses, which swell the charges, it is said, to nearly half a million, consist of bounties paid for captures, and for the different agencies and Vice-Admiralty Courts maintained along the coast. After all, the total is insignificant, unless it be shown that our efforts are in truth useless. A *proved waste* of expenditure, it is freely admitted, should be put an end to. It is hoped that the foregoing examination of the Evidence recently taken before both Houses of Parliament will be found to negative the hypothesis that such is the case with respect to this branch of the national policy. In conclusion, it should be remarked that in no instance has the most zealous advocate of the Squadron proposed that one tittle of fresh expense should be

incurred. It is true that the armament has long been miserably adapted to meet the requisitions it has had to meet. Inferior slow vessels have been sent to the coast when fast sailers were wanted ; large and unnecessarily costly ships have been sent when small ones would have been far more efficient ; and even when, late in the day, steam-ships were supplied, they were often the refuse of the Service that were dedicated to the cause of humanity. A smaller class and increased number of cruizers has been loudly called for, and, as has been before observed, is now in a state of preparation*, a new and more powerful course of action has been entered on ; the doubtful and hesitating report of Mr. Hutt's Committee has produced the conclusive inquiry of a Committee of the House of Lords, terminating in the unanimous and powerful report, which urges the certainty of eventual success if former errors be avoided or remedied. If these recommendations should be vigorously followed out, and if redoubled energy in every department of antagonism to the unholy traffic shall ultimately prove to be the result of the inquiry first set on foot with the

* Since writing the above I am told I was premature in stating that small vessels were in preparation for this service. It is for the Custom House, I now learn, that such a class is preparing as would be adapted for the coast of Africa, namely, a screw vessel of 300 tons, and 60-horse power. It is to be hoped that this is an earnest of what the Government intends to do for the service of the coast of Africa. The evidence of naval officers proves that it would be a great saving of expense to the country if a proper class of screw vessels were to be built at once, to replace the more expensive and less efficient class of steamers now employed. Captain Halstead's evidence before the Lords' Committee is quite conclusive on this point, not to speak of the valuable opinion of Admiral the Hon. George Elliot, who formerly commanded the Squadron, and is confessedly one of the most successful of our naval architects.

opposite intention, humanity may, in a short time, have cause to be thankful that the policy of Great Britain has been called in question, and that the expediency of persevering in her righteous efforts have been denied for a season.



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